## REMARKS

The Office Action dated December 1, 2006, has been received and carefully reviewed. The preceding amendments and the following remarks form a full and complete response thereto. Claim 1 is amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-14 are pending in this application and are submitted for reconsideration.

Claims 1-8, 10-12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,562,935 to Martin in view of U.S. Patent 6,328,552 to Hendrickson. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection and submits that claims 1-14 recite subject matter not disclosed or suggested by the cited prior art.

Claim 1, upon which claims 2-14 depend, recites a standardised modular system (100) for moulds of injection moulding machines that includes an injection assembly (1), an ejection assembly (5), and a modular mould (2). The injection assembly (1) is provided with a plurality of injectors (14) for injection of plastic material into the mould. The ejection assembly (5) is provided with a plurality of ejectors (68, 69) for ejection of the moulded item (90) from the mould. The modular mould (2) includes a fixed mould half, a movable mould half, female mould inserts, male mould inserts, and first and second adapter means. The fixed mould half (3) is associated with the injection assembly (1). The movable mould half (4) is associated with the ejection assembly (5) and is movable from a mould closed position wherein the plastic material is injected into the mould to a mould open position wherein the item formed by the mould is ejected. The female mould inserts (32) and male mould inserts (42) are removably mounted in special seats formed respectively in a female mould plate (30) of the fixed mould half and in a male mould plate (40) of the movable mould half so as to be modularly composable and decomposable, according to the item to be moulded. The first adapter means (8) includes removably mounted inserts disposed, interchangeably, between the injection assembly (1) and the fixed mould half (3) so as to allow the arrangement of the injectors (14) of the injection assembly to be varied. The second adapter means (56, 66, 67, 83) is disposed, interchangeably, between the ejection assembly (5) and the movable mould half (4) so as to allow the arrangement of the ejectors (68, 69) of the ejector assembly to be varied.

In contrast to the present invention, Martin discloses an injection moulding machine that allows a quick change of a standard (not modular) mould base 20. A pair of adapter plates 41, 43 is attached to the faces of the platens of the injection moulding machine. A pair of ear plates 81, 83 is attached to the back surface of the standard mould base 20. It is clear from the description and drawings of Martin that both adapter plates 41, 43 and ear plates 81, 83 are disposed external to the mould base 20. The adapter plates 41, 43 and ear plate 81, 83 are not members of the mould base 20, but are instead, members of the injection moulding machine.

Applicant submits that the standard mould base 20 is well known in the art. Such bases are cheap mould bases which are used for production of only a few items. In fact, when the production is to be change, the overall mould base must be replaced with another mould base.

In contrast to Martin, the present invention provides a modular mould that includes female mould inserts (32) removably mounted in special seats in a female mould plate (30), male mould inserts (42) removably mounted in special seats in a male mould plate (40), first adapter means (8) interchangeably disposed between the injection assembly (1) and the female mould plate (30), and second adapter means (56, 66, 67, 83) interchangeably disposed between the ejection assembly (5) and the male mould plate (40). As described in the present specification and disclosed in the drawings of the present application, the first adapter means (8) and the second adapter means (56, 66, 67, 83) are disposed internal to the modular mould base. As a result, when the production has to be changed ,it is sufficient to change only the female mould inserts (32) and male mould inserts (42) and consequently, first adapter means (8) and second adapter means (56, 66, 67, 83).

Unlike with the prior art, the overall supporting construction of the mould does not have to be changed, i.e.: the plate structure (10) of the injection assembly, the female mould plate (30), the male mould plate (40), the table structure (58, 62, 63) and the plate structure (50, 54, 55) of the ejection assembly, can all be reused for different types of production. It is to be noted that the supporting plate construction (10, 30, 40, 58, 62, 63, 50, 54, 55) of the mould is the most expensive part of the mould, because it must be able to work for many years and for different types of production. On the contrary, the interchangeable members (32, 42, 8, 56, 66, 67, 83) of the mould are the cheapest parts of the mould, because they are apt to work only for a specified production. For this reason the present invention has distinct advantages over the mould of Martin because it can be used for production of a great number of different items.

Thus, in view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that Martin fails to disclose each and every element of claim 1, upon which claims 2-14 depend. Hendrickson fails to cure the above-described deficiencies of Martin. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1-14 is improper and requests that all rejections be withdrawn and that claims 1-14 be allowed.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the Applicant's undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account No. 02-2135.

Respectfully submitted,

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